

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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21

ACTION AF-07

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P 151350Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7525

C O N F I D E N T I A L BLANTYRE 1509

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MI

SUBJC REV AND MRS CHARLES H. ABERNATHY

REF: STATE 251139

1. ABERNATHYS CAME TO MALAWI FEW MONTHS AGO AT REQUEST OF LOCAL PENTECOSTAL GROUP WHICH HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY HAD FOREIGN PASTOR. THEY ARRIVED WITH VASA BUT WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT PERMIT (OVERSIGHT PROBABLY DUE TO MISUNDERSTANDING OF INSTRUCTIONS FROM MALAWI EMBASSY IN U.S.) THEY HAVE BEEN IN VISITOR STATUS SINCE ARRIVAL AWAITING ACTION ON EMPLOYMENT PERMIT (TEP) APPLICATION.

2. CHIEF IMMIGRATION OFFICER TOLD CONSULAR OFFICER NOV 15 THAT POLICE HEADQUARTERS INSTRUCTED HIM SEVERAL DAYS AGO THAT TEP APPLICATION NOT APPROVED SO VISA SHOULD NOT BE RENEWED. HE THEN INFORMED ABERNATHYS THEY MUST LEAVE. HOWEVER, NOTE CAME FROM HEADQUARTERS TWO DAYS LATER SAYING DECISION ON APPLICATION NOT YET FINAL. IMMIGRATION THEN TOLD ABERNATHYS THEY COULD STAY UNTIL DETERMINATION MADE. THIS IS CURRENT STATUS.

3. FYI: CHIEF IMMIGRATION OFFICER CONFIDENTIALLY TOLD US HE HAS HEARD RUMOR THAT ALLEGATION MADE TO POLICE BY UNKNOWN PERSONS THAT SOME CONNECTION EXISTS BETWEEN THIS CHURCH OR MEMBERS THEREOF AND JEHOVAHS WITNESSES. THUS POLICE MUST SATISFY TOP GOM OFFICIALS THIS NOT TRUE BEFORE FAVORABLE DECISION ON ABERNATHYS COULD BE MADE.
STEVENSON

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